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Message Text

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PAGE 01 BERLIN 04557 121208Z
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BERLIN 04557

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FOR EUR/CE ONLY

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY) GE
SUBJECT: CONTINGENCY QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON GDR
FOR PRESIDENT'S TOWN MEETING IN BERLIN

REFS: (A) STATE 158052, (B) BERLIN 4209, (C) BERLIN 4352,
(D) BERLIN 4408, (E) BERLIN 4508, (F) USBER 1625

1. EMBASSY HAS REPORTED ON THE RECENT TRIALS AND SENTENCINGS OF EAST GERMAN DISSIDENTS RUDOLF BAHRO (BERLIN 4408) AND NICO HUEBNER (BERLIN 4508) AND HAS NOTED THAT THESE EVENTS INCREASE THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE PRESIDENT WILL BE QUESTIONED CONCERNING THEIR FATES AND UNITED STATES VIEWS AND ACTIONS ON THEIR BEHALF DURING THE PRESIDENT'S TOWN MEETING IN BERLIN.

2. THE EMBASSY HAS REVIEWED THE CONTINGENCY QUESTION AND ANSWER ON THIS TOPIC CONTAINED BERLIN 4209 IN THE WAKE OF THE SENTENCINGS AND BELIEVES THAT THE PROPOSED REPONSE CONTAINED THEREIN CONTINUES TO BE APPROPRIATE. WE FEEL THAT THE PRESIDENT SHOULD AVOID DEALING WITH THE SPECIFICS OF
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THESE CASES IN ORDER NOT TO JEOPARDIZE THE EFFORTS WHICH THE FRG MAY UNDERTAKE TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF BAHRO AND HUEBNER THROUGH THE RANSOMING PROCESS. WE HAVE NO INFORMATION HERE AS TO WHAT PLANS THE FRG MAY HAVE IN THIS REGARD OR WHAT THE PROSPECTS WOULD BE FOR RELEASE BUT WE BELIEVE WE SHOULD DO NOTHING WHICH MAY COMPLICATE THE PROCESS UNNECESSARILY.

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3. WE NOTE THAT IN HUEBNER'S OWN STATEMENT OF JULY 10 (USBER 1625) HE CALLS FOR "AGGRESSIVE" EFFORTS FROM THE WEST ON BEHALF OF THE VICTIMS OF HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN THE GDR. HOWEVER, HIS STATEMENT IS VERY CLEARLY DIRECTED AT WEST GERMAN POLITICIANS AND MEDIA AND IS COUCHED IN TERMS OF A GERMAN NATIONALITY ENCOMPASSING BOTH THE FRG AND THE GDR.

4. THEREFORE, WE CONTINUE TO FAVOR A STRONGLY WORDED STATEMENT OF GENERAL PRINCIPLES BY THE PRESIDENT IF EITHER THE BAHRO OR HUEBNER CASE IS RAISED DURING THE VISIT. IN PARTICULAR, WE RECOMMEND A REITERATION OF THE PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES TO THE EFFECT THAT THERE ARE COSTS TO BE PAID BY COUNTRIES WHICH ENGAGE IN SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, BUT WITHOUT SPECIFYING WHAT THESE MIGHT BE IN THE CASES OF RUDOLF BAHRO AND NICO HUEBNER.

5. IF THE QUESTION ARISES IN THE MORE GENERAL CONTEXT OF THE WALL AND US RELATIONS WITH THE GDR WE FAVOR A STRONGLY WORDED RESPONSE ALONG THE LINES CONTAINED IN THE FOURTH Q & A IN BERLIN 4209.

6. IF A QUESTION ARISES CONCERNING RECENT GDR
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DECISION TO INTRODUCE PRE-MILITARY TRAINING INTO THE NINTH AND TENTH CLASSES OR PUBLIC SCHOOLS THIS FALL (BERLIN 4352), WE WOULD RECOMMEND THAT THE PRESIDENT REPLY ALONG THE FOLLOWING LINES. I AM AWARE OF PRESS REPORTS THAT THE GDR INTENDS TO INTRODUCE SUCH OBLIGATORY TRAINING AND I AM ALSO AWARE THAT CHURCH LEADERS IN THE GDR HAVE EXPRESSED THEMSELVES ABOUT THIS MATTER. I BELIEVE SUCH TRAINING IS NOT CONDUCIVE TO IMPROVEMENT OF THE ATMOSPHERE IN CENTRAL EUROPE AND IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE SPIRIT OF HELSINKI.

7. WHILE WE ARE AWARE OF THE RESTRICTIONS ON DISTRIBUTION (REF A, PARA 2) WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF EMBASSY BONN AND USBER COULD RECEIVE COPIES OF THIS MESSAGE AS THE VIEWS OF THESE POSTS ON THE CONTINGENCY QUESTION AND ANSWERS ON THE HUEBNER-BAHRO CASES WOULD SEEM DIRECTLY RELEVANT. BOLEN

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